

TRENTON TIMES (NJ)
30 April 1980

Princeton profs linked to CIA

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PRINCETON — A Princeton University graduate student has uncovered evidence that a group of professors from Princeton and other major universities held regular secret meetings with the director of the Central Intelligence Agency during the 1950s and 1960s, apparently to help the CIA analyze conditions in foreign countries.

John Cavanagh, a student at the university's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, says he found a number of documents that relate to the group's ac-

tivities in the collection of Allen W. Dulles' personal papers housed in Princeton's Seeley G. Mudd manuscript library.

Dulles, a member of Princeton's Class of 1914, headed the CIA from 1953 until 1961. He served as a charter trustee of the university from 1961 to 1963, and was listed as a trustee emeritus from 1963 until his death in 1969.

Cavanagh said the documents he found do not describe the group's activities in detail.

But he said letters and other documents filed under "Princeton Consultants" and "Central Intelligence Agency: Panel of Consultants (Princeton Consultants)" indicate that an organized group of professors met four times a year in Princeton with Dulles and other government officials and were paid \$50 a day for two-day sessions.

CAVANAGH SAID there is no evidence in the Dulles papers that the "Princeton Consultants" ever worked on actual plans for secret CIA operations in foreign countries.

But he said their work might have been used as "an intelligence base" for CIA operations that have helped overthrow several foreign governments, including the one headed by Mohammed Mossadegh in Iran in the early 1950s.

"Because of the covert nature of their work, we don't know precisely what the input was of the Princeton Consultants in any of these operations," he said.

Cavanagh described his findings in a copyrighted article in the Forerunner, a student newspaper, and discussed them at a news conference yesterday.

He said the group usually gathered for two days at a time. It apparently was their job, he said, to advise the CIA's Office of National Estimates, which prepared the official intelligence analyses upon which the agency based its overseas operations.

MANY OF the group's meetings, he said, were held in the Gun Room of the private Nassau Club.

In the Forerunner article, Cavanagh quoted James Billington, a former Princeton professor who specialized in Russian history, as telling the Daily Princetonian that he received \$50 a day from the CIA. Presumably, all of the participants in the group's meetings received the same fee.

Cavanagh said the Dulles papers include only an incomplete list of professors who worked with the Princeton Consultants. They include experts from Princeton, Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Duke and the University of California at Berkeley.

Most of those named in the papers were highly regarded experts in their fields who, according to their listings in "Who's Who in America," had worked for and advised a number of government agencies.

In addition to Billington, who now heads the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, the Princeton faculty members involved with the group included: Cyril Black, the director of Princeton's Center of International Studies

and a specialist in Soviet studies; Joseph Strayer, a retired medieval history professor; and Klaus Knorr, a retired public affairs professor, now one of three men conducting a review of the CIA's techniques for gathering and analyzing intelligence information.

NONE OF those men could be reached for comment yesterday.

A woman who answered the telephone at Strayer's home in Princeton said: "He's not going to talk over the phone about this" because he has already written something about the group for publication in the Princeton Alumni Weekly.

"If you call Cyril Black, he'll tell you the same thing," she said.

Although there has been no previous public discussion of the existence of an organized group of CIA consultants meeting in Princeton, it has been public knowledge that Billington, Strayer and Knorr had done some work for the agency.

Cavanagh quoted a 1976 Daily Princetonian interview with Black in which he insisted that he had never been in the "employ" of the CIA.

CAVANAGH'S FORERUNNER article says, however, that Black confirmed in an interview last week that he had done work as a consultant. "Nobody ever asked me if I was a consultant," he is quoted as saying.

Civil Engineering Prof. Steve Slaby, who appeared at the press conference with Cavanagh, insisted that "the names of specific people is not the issue...it's the wider issue" of the chilling effect such work can have on academic freedom.

Whenever professors or other members of a university community become involved in secret CIA activities, he insisted, "the principle of open free scholarship is violated."

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Slaby said a series of proposed guidelines designed to curb such work by Princeton professors in the future would be discussed at the faculty's May 5 meeting.

Princeton's faculty advisory committee on policy conducted a study of faculty rules on work for outside agencies during the 1977-78 academic year.

IN MARCH 1978, the committee recommended — and the faculty adopted — a requirement that professors keep the chairmen of their departments and the dean of the faculty informed of such work.

Under the proposal that Slaby described yesterday, faculty members would have to announce any work they are going to do for outside agencies and make the results public.

Although the Dulles papers have been open to the public for the last two years, researchers who want to see them must apply to a special committee.

They also must sign a contract promising to obtain the committee's approval before publishing any articles based on the papers.

Nancy Bressler, the curator of the Dulles papers, said the committee was established at the request of the Dulles family.

“THE LIBRARY would of course prefer that these papers and all other papers were freely accessible without any such restrictions, but we would not have received them if we did not

agree to them,” she said.

She said library policy prohibited disclosing the names of the committee's three members. But, she said, “They haven't denied anyone access and they have never objected to any articles.”

Cavanagh confirmed that the committee raised no objections to his article, although it did take them five weeks to approve it. In the meantime, he claims, they discussed his findings with others including Black and the Princeton Alumni Weekly.

Cavanagh says the Dulles papers indicate that former Princeton University President Robert Goheen,

now the U.S. ambassador to India, had been invited by Dulles to meet with the group. There is no indication of whether he accepted.

T. Dennis Sullivan, assistant to current President William G. Bowen, said he has never heard of any similar offers to Bowen. As far as he knows, he said, there is no organized CIA consulting group still meeting in Princeton.

But, he said, “We're not talking about an official university connection with an agency outside the university. We're talking about individual faculty members” who are not prohibited by university rules from participating in such work.